Sen. Schweiker, Face Nation, 7/20/75; Plots vs Castro; Kickback on JFK

JDW; Very glad to have tape. I hope to get transcript, if you'd like one. While I'm tired and may not have been fully acute, I have two impressions that can seem to be and may be contradictory: the he does not really mean he believes the JFK assassination was retaliation but does mean it was one of a number of elements that should not have been ignored by the Warren Commission and adds stress to emphasize the latter point; and that maybe he really does mean this.

He was unequivocal in believing that there should be a new investigation (and on this I am familiar with some of his mail). In the context of the day the strongest and safest course, particularly when no Senator has a solid case and after the Rock. Com. Report, is in terms of political assassinations in general. On this he was clear, emphatic and laid it on the CIA, as one of its functions that must end.

It was intefesting to me that when Schorr mentioned the name Oswald Schweiker cut him off and responded not in terms of Oswald.

He was also clear that such an investigation would not be the function of this committee, which is what I've felt it would hold

On the JFK assassination he is not the one who introduced the subject. He did speak at length and emphatically about foreign political assassinations going back several decades. In any context this is the safest approach and the one most easily comprehended and approved ~~thm~~ by the electorate.

If he wanted the JFK question asked or if he planted it on himself or if he anticipated it, he took the one approach that, regardless of the overtones and inherent suggestions, was the safe one, the one he could handle, the one with no kickback likely except as taken to mean there was a retaliatory assassination.

That he meant it the way it was headlined is supported by his interpretation of that AP story. However, the Times-Picayune headline was of a warning against continuing raids. The words attributed to Castro are not aimed at JFK personally. They are a general warning. I think a fair interpretation is tit for tat. But not tat without tit. It was rather a warning to stop the attempts at assassination and raids.

I take the crux to be that there was no real investigation without this being investigated; it wasn't investigated; it must be.

Or, that Whitten's interpretation can be correct.

It was not a call for a limited re-investigation, limited to retaliation.

If the immediate effect is not good, having been taken as meaning there was a Castro retaliation, I think the long-run effect will be good. I think it is now more likely that this commitee will recommend a new JFK assassination. At least.

The poor quality of the xerox Whitten sent me, one of two he said he made from hisx taking his to be one of Schweiker's, the I would say there were several generations of xeroxes between the original and Schweiker's copy. Or, it was one of the things given to the committee, of which he was given a copy.

(I told Whitten to whom to speak at the T-P to get a clear copy and any other similar or relevant stories. If he gets one I think I will. His attitude has changed.)

It is a very interesting maneuver. Maybe a bit more interesting because Herman asked the first question, not Schorr. Schorr is working on it; Herman is not. However, George has a general familiarity with my work.

I found the Kerr treatments fair, with the mistake you noted not that important. I also found that his interpretations of the meaning were fair. It was not correct and I did not ell him that I got it by FOIA and it is not true that all the HC files are now declassified.

The handling of and quotes from the CJR on reporter/CIA agents interesting. I did not know of that piece. Thanks much and best,